New Jersey Militia Newsletter

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All persons are by nature free and independent, and have certain natural and unalienable rights, among which are those of enjoying and defending life and liberty, of acquiring, possessing, and protecting property, and of obtaining safety and happiness.

-- Article 1, Section 1, New Jersey State Constitution

What is the 'sovereign citizen' movement?

A growing number of people who believe that laws do not apply to them threaten law enforcement, experts say.

So-called sovereign citizens believe they are immune from government rules.

Coronavirus mitigation measures, including mandatory social distancing and mask wearing, may also be fueling the anti-government conspiracy and spreading the view the deadly pandemic as a hoax.

The FBI has described the movement as "domestic terrorism" and calls followers "anti-government extremists who believe that even though they physically reside in this country, they are separate or 'sovereign'" from the U.S.

The ideology dating from the 1970s grew out of Posse Comitatus, a US anti-government group that contained many followers who were anti-Semitic and believed governments were controlled by Jews.

It rose in prominence in the 1990s alongside the militia movement, says Mark Pitcavage, a researcher at the Anti-Defamation League.

In the late 1990s, the ideology reached Canada through anti-tax groups, before later going to Australia and then the UK and Ireland, says Mr Pitcavage.

In Australia, police this week attributed a "dangerous" rise in people resisting lockdown orders - sometimes violently - to the sovereign citizen movement.

Victoria Chief Police Commissioner Shane Patton said on Tuesday that officers have been forced "to smash the windows of cars and pull people out to provide details" after they have refused to answer questions or show documents.

Sovereign citizens and anti-government groups became familiar to Americans in the 1990s. But any sympathy towards such movements evaporated after the horrific 1995 Oklahoma City attack.

Now there are signs that their ideas are catching on again.

The political climate is to blame, including emergency coronavirus measures and anti-police sentiment after the killing of George Floyd.

Along with groups like the Boogaloo Boys, Three Percenters, and the Proud Boys, sovereign citizens are one of the fringe blocs who've popped up on social media and on the streets.

Their ideas travel to London and even to Singapore.

But it's the US where the greatest potential for violence lies - particularly as Americans get deeper into a pandemic and a potentially fraught election campaign.

The sovereign citizen movement is different from the militia movement, which puts more emphasis on paramilitary weapons training and organisation, experts say.

Sovereign citizens - which also go by many other names including constitutionalists, common law citizens, freemen, and non-resident aliens - favour legal arguments.

It also differs from the QAnon conspiracy theory which believes President Donald Trump is saving the world from evil, because sovereign citizens view all government figures, including Mr Trump, as illegitimate.

It is hard to determine the number of believers worldwide due to a lack of structure.

The general ideology is based on the belief that the original government set up by the US founders, which most adherents refer to as "common law", was slowly replaced by an illegitimate government sometime in the 1800s.

Followers around the world make similar claims about their own governments - or the British Royal Family as is the case with Australia, says Mr Pitcavage.

They believe there is a legal way to opt out of the current legal system that comes through filing documents and ending what they view as "contracts" with the government, such as driving licences and other identity documents.

Adherents are told by "redemption gurus" that they can use phrases, which they believe to have legal meaning, to "divorce themselves" from the illegitimate government, says Mr Pitcavage. They often print out and carry documents which they claim prove their status.

"And once you do that, once you have regained your sovereignty, none of the laws, rules, taxes, court orders, anything of the illegitimate de facto government have any more power or justification over you whatsoever."

Followers resist all government laws and regulations, no matter how trivial, and in the US often file lengthy legal battles against the government, which critics refer to as "paper terrorism". They sometimes film encounters with police using the phrases that they believe protect them, including "am I being detained?"

They have occasionally set up "common law courts" and issued bogus arrest warrants for US officials. Some have been arrested with fake car registration plates they have issued to themselves, or have even printed their own currency believing the dollar to be invalid. Mr Pitcavage says it's common to find European followers cite the US criminal code, which has no legal bearing there.

Some followers believe it possible to access a secret_government-held fund once they become sovereign. The IRS says on its website that the notion of "secret accounts assigned to each citizen is pure fantasy."

Some think that "by filing a series of complex, legal-sounding documents, the sovereign can tap into that secret Treasury account for his own purposes," according to the Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks extremist groups.

Followers are often struggling financially or are people who cannot tolerate government bureaucracy, says Mr Pitcavage.

"The sovereign citizen movement, through its pseudo-legal theories and tactics, tells them who to blame - it's the illegitimate government, it's the illegitimate banking system, it's this and that. And then offers them ways out." – bbc.com 5 August 2020

NY Times Opinion: I'm a Black American. I Need a Gun to Feel Safe in This Country, by S.H. Blannelberry

The New York Times posted Wednesday a video entitled, "I'm a Black American. I Need a Gun to Feel Safe in This Country."

The primary injunction, "Go buy a gun. Arm yourself. And just make sure you get some training."

Amen to that!

GunsAmerica has been advocating that for years! Black America would benefit the most from responsible gun ownership, both because blacks are disproportionately the victims of violent crime and because the anti-gun establishment has racist roots.

The Times paints a different picture, naturally. They reduce it to binary white/black issue as though it's white America threatening black America. Not true. Working-class whitey is not an enemy of black people. The true enemy is government and the power brokers who seek to expand its control over the masses of all colors, races, creeds, genders, etc.

Politicians champion gun control because they know that keeping black America unarmed means more black victims. More black victims mean more votes for big government solutions to "curb the gun violence epidemic" (or "end the war on drugs") — "solutions" that erode fundamental rights and perpetuate the very problem they claim to address, which means peddlers of those failed policies stay in power.

Ever notice that cities with stringent gun laws usually have high rates of violent crime? If gun control was a viable fix why do Chicago (510 homicides in 2019) and D.C. (166 homicides in 2019, a record number) have so many shootings? And why do the people keep electing leaders who maintain the status quo (there's been a Democratic mayor in D.C. since 1971 and one in Chicago since 1931)?

It's almost funny, but one of the women featured in the video unwittingly acknowledges this very phenomenon.

Kat Traylor, I think her name was, says, "I've been fighting for gun regulation in my state for eight years. Regardless of who was in office, our lives didn't get any better for a black and brown community in fact they just stayed the same. That's when the realization hit that until all the wrong people don't have guns, you need a gun."

Now she's half "woke" to the truth: no political party is going to save you. Quite the opposite if you keep voting in politicians who sacrifice your freedoms at the altar of public safety. Remember, at its best, government is a necessary evil.

Bottom line: there is no legislative solution to combating violent people or a tyrannical government. The only option is to take personal responsibility for your safety and to exercise your rights. Be prepared to defend yourself, your family, and your property from any malefactor, be it a thug or a gov't jackboot.

Be careful though. This way of thinking is contagious. It breeds independence and self-reliance, an awakening to a desire for a limited government, and a hankering thirst for liberty or the ability to act without permission. .All scary things if one is a Nanny State ideologue.

More black people can and should bear arms. We've been saying it here on GunsAmerica for years. And, we welcome them with open arms because we've long acknowledged that armed men and armed women are citizens while unarmed men and unarmed women are subjects. – www.gunsamerica.com July 1, 2020

Gun sales spike among African-Americans: 'Our ancestors died for us to vote, they also died for us to be able to carry guns'

When Americans panic, they buy guns — lots of them. During the first six months of 2020 gun retailers have reported a record 10.3 million firearm transactions, according to the National Shooting Sports Foundation. Overall, gun sales in the U.S. have increased by 95 percent while ammunition sales have increased 139 percent compared to the same period last year.

African-Americans account for the highest increase in gun purchases of any group.

"Black men and women show a 58.2% increase in purchases during the first six months of 2020 versus the same period last year," the NSSF

reported. “There has never been a sustained surge in firearm sales quite like what we are in the midst of.”
While much of the spike in sales early on can be attributed to uncertainty surrounding business shutdowns and stay-at-home orders because of COVID-19, more recent sales may be due to an uneasiness around Black Lives Matter rallies and increased calls to defund police departments.
Michael Cargill, a Black owner of Central Texas Gun Works in Austin, says that amid all the anxiety over the pandemic and rallies, people are buying guns to take personal responsibility for their safety. “People were concerned with people breaking into their home or breaking into their vehicle or attacking them while they’re in their vehicles [after COVID-19],” he said. “So people wanted to take their own protection into their own hands.” – Yahoo News August 3, 2020

America Cowering

The logical leap from the video [of the death of George Floyd while in the custody of police officer Derek Chauvin] to an assumption of racism was based on a single structural argument: that blacks are more likely than whites to meet violence at the hands of the police. If you reckon from population, this is true. Per capita, blacks are about twice as likely to be roughed up by the authorities. But if you reckon not from the black percentage of the population but from black participation in criminal activity, explanations other than racism come into view. Blacks make up 26.9%of arrests, about double their percentage in the population (13%). They are twice as likely to encounter the police at their worst because they are twice as likely to encounter the police, period. In fact, the black percentage of arrests grows as offenses become more serious: 38% for violent crimes in general (three times their percentage of the population) and 53% for murder (four times their percentage of the population), Despite some improvement in the early years of this century, crimes committed by blacks remains one of the most serious social problems in the U.S – not least for blacks themselves, who make up more than half of murder victims. The “Stop Killing Us” signs ubiquitous at Black Lives Matter rallies are not justified as a criticism of the police, still less as an indictment of other races’ violence. According to the FBI’s Uniform Crime Report of 2016, of interracial killings in 2016 in which the races of those involved are known, blacks were perpetrators in 62%, whites in 32%, Asians and American Indians (combined) in 6%. -- Claremont Review of Books Summer 2020

Grantham: US Riots Take a Page from the Latin American Socialist Playbook

The second wave of riots is here. Violence in Portland. Rioting in Seattle. Police in Chicago ambushed. Violence against government institutions and private businesses, specific targets that represent national sovereignty and free markets, respectively.
The “Bolivarian Breeze” or the “Bolivarian Hurricane" are phrases used by Diosdado Cabello, a drug trafficker in Venezuela and an influential member of Nicolás Maduro’s political party. He used those phrases to describe the organized riots that hit Chile, Ecuador, and Colombia in 2019, the so called “Bolivarian Alliance”.

Led now by Nicolás Maduro, the Bolivarian Alliance is an effort to achieve socialism in the Americas. At its zenith, the alliance consisted of 11 countries and three observers, including Iran and Syria. The Bolivarian Alliance has morphed into a political-criminal network that seeks to destabilize America through of cocaine. It has also fomented unrest in Latin American countries pursuing free market and democratic reforms.

In mid-October 2019, Chile saw protests against a 4-cent rate hike on public transit escalate into organized riots. Professional agitators burned government buildings and private companies.

That same month, instigators tied to Venezuela and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) – a communist guerrilla movement -- caused so much violence in Ecuador that President Lenin Moreno had to leave the capital after the Moreno government announced a plan to end fuel subsidies.. When the protests turned violent, civilian groups with ties to the FARC were found to have been at the “forefront” of the subsequent unrest.

Protests then broke out in Colombia in November in response to the government’s plan for pension reform

In early 2020, Diosdado Cabello bragged that this “Bolivarian Hurricane” would soon strike the U.S.
Maduro supporters fomented unrest in Miami in June 2020. Some protesters flew flags of the socialist Sandinista party of Nicaragua in Florida, while some in Minneapolis waved the flag of the Mapuche indigenous group in Chile. Agitators in D.C. sported Hugo Chávez imagery. All iconography that represents the Bolivarian Network.

In Bolivia, riots followed the that resignation of former President Evo Morales last year were accompanied by his supporters to try and block food from entering urban cities. Bolivian authorities published audio of an intercept conversation of Morales which he is heard saying exactly this: “don’t let food into the cities.” A concerning sign of things to come should U.S. socialist and anarchist agitators follow the playbook of their South American counterparts.

The recent U.S. protests have been accompanied by statues being torn down, street names being changed, and brands reevaluating mascots and taglines. A Venezuelan actress living in the U.S., wrote on social media that: “statues came down – [Hugo] Chávez didn’t want that history displayed … and then he changed the street names … then came the school curriculum … then some movies couldn’t be shown, then certain TV channels, and so on and so forth.”

For many in Latin America, socialism is more than just a failed theory or ideology. For those in Venezuela, Cuba, Nicaragua, and more, socialism

represents repressive regimes where citizens no longer have a voice or a vote. Those failures are now being exported to other countries through mass national protests, themselves long departed from their original grievance. Venezuela's Maduro regime and its allies have turned unrest into an asymmetric weapon of warfare, intent on destabilizing the neighborhood.

America remains well positioned to push back against the socialist threat because of the economic principles to which it subscribes. Free markets, more than any other freedom, defy the privileges of the socialist elite and expose their fraudulent ideologies.

David Grantham is a Senior Fellow for the Center for a Secure Free Society (SFS) and author of the book Consequences: An Intelligence Officer's War. -- breitbart.com Aug. 1, 2020

Gun Store Robberies Are On The Rise

Thieves stole more than 1,000 firearms from gun stores across the country in just over one week this spring, according to the Bureau of Alcohol Tobacco Firearms and Explosives.

That haul between May 28-June 5 would have accounted for nearly one-fifth of the roughly 5,600 guns reported stolen in all of 2019.

Thomas Chittum, ATF deputy director for field operations, says a lot of that appears to be tied to unrest around the country in the wake of the police killing of George Floyd.

In at least a few instances, peaceful protests ended with looting of businesses, including gun stores. However, Chittum said there has been an upward trend all year and that the unrest alone does not explain the upswing.

Chittum said most of the thefts are smash and grabs — a brick through the window, forcing open a door, even driving a car through the front of a store.

As of right now, education is one of the few prevention tools the ATF has. There is no federal law requiring gun store owners to secure their shops. Former ATF Agent David Chipman says that's a problem.

Chipman is now a senior policy adviser at the gun control group Giffords, which supports legislation to require gun store security measures. Chipman says there should be minimum security standards, like the ones required of federally insured banks.

A bill introduced in the U.S. House last year would have required gun store security measures like alarms, locked cabinets and security gates. But it didn't go anywhere. The gun lobby has consistently opposed such requirements, though it encourages store owners to protect their shops.

"We're in this environment where any regulation of the gun industry is viewed by lobbyists as somehow an infringement on people's rights," Chipman said.

Despite the ATF's concern over the spike in gun store thefts, it is unlikely that these incidents are the main supplier of firearms ultimately used in crimes.

Philip Cook, a professor emeritus at Duke University says that surveys of inmates incarcerated for crimes involving firearms says, "Only about 4% of them report that they stole the gun that they used in crime."

Cook said most guns used in crimes were purchased at a store, though that doesn't mean the person who uses the gun in a crime was allowed to possess one in the first place.

It's almost always true that when they were first sold at retail, that sale was legal," he said. "So they start off as a legal sale and then they change hands in different ways."

There were nearly 14 million guns sold legally in 2019, according to industry estimates. The ATF says about 5,600 were stolen from shops in that time.

Law enforcement may devote too many resources to fighting gun store thefts at the expense of getting better data on the gun-to-crime pipeline.

"Some of the speculation, including by prominent police chiefs," Cook said, "has been way off the mark in terms of claiming that stolen guns account for most of the problem. -- 2020 Boise State Public Radio July 21, 2020

Facebook removes 790 QAnon Groups

Facebook said it has removed 790 groups, 100 pages and 1,500 ads connected to the far right-wing conspiracy theory QAnon.

The removals were made under its Dangerous Individuals and Organizations policy to include groups and movements that have demonstrated "significant risks to public safety" but that did not reach its criteria to be banned as a dangerous organization.

Facebook also restricted more than 1,950 groups and 440 pages on Facebook and more than 10,000 accounts on Instagram, its wildly popular photo-based social media platform, linked to QAnon. These groups, pages and accounts may be removed as Facebook reviews their content.

"We have seen growing movements that, while not directly organizing violence, have celebrated violent acts, shown that they have weapons and suggest they will use them or have individual followers with patterns of violent behavior," Facebook said.

Last week, the Anti-Defamation League warned that QAnon could cause real-world violence, and documented instances of serious crimes including murder and kidnapping having been carried out by adherents to the conspiracy.

QAnon claims that the world elites maintain a "Satanic child-murdering sex cult," and that President Donald Trump will eventually bring them to justice, the ADL said.

The move by Facebook follows Twitter last month announcing it would take action to limit and block accounts associated with the conspiracy, stating it had already removed more than 7,000 such accounts.

Facebook said Wednesday it also removed 980 groups, 520 pages and 160 ads while restricting more than 1,400 hashtags associated with militia

organizations and groups that encourage rioting, including Antifa. – UPI August 20, 2020

Virginia: "No Local Gun Control" Ordinances Enacted

Almost all counties in Virginia have passed Second Amendment sanctuary resolutions that avow that county government will not enforce the state's unconstitutional gun control laws. However the state's 193 localities have the power to ban guns in certain locations, including parks, government buildings, recreation and community centers, and at permitted events and streets surrounding those events.

As the Virginia Citizens Defense League notes, "If we let localities do this, we will have a massive spiderweb of gun control across the Commonwealth. That spiderweb is exactly what the gun-grabbers want. It makes carrying a gun such a headache because you have to know the gun laws of over 193 localities. Gun-controllers want to keep expanding that prohibited location list until gun owners will just leave their guns at home out of pure frustration."

"What other of our civil rights do we have that localities can carve up?" Said VCDL president Philip Van Cleave in an interview with *The News & Advance*.

To end the confusion the following jurisdictions have passed "no local gun control" ordinances: Appomattox County, Patrick County, Pittsylvania County, Rappahannock County, Halifax County, Culpepper County, Franklin County. Town of Charlotte, Crewe, Goshen, Grayson, Frederick, Rocky Mount, Scott, Wythe, King William, Spotsylvania, Powhatan

The following jurisdictions did not pass NLCG ordinances, in the belief that such are not necessary because their "Second Amendment sanctuary" designation would make null any local gun control ordinance: Bedford county, Fauquier county, Pulaski county, Southampton county. Town of Colonial Heights Various VCDLAlerts 8/4-8/13, 2020

Review: *Gun Control Myths: How politicians, the media and botched "studies" have twisted the facts on gun control* by Dr. John R. Lott Jr.

Lott blows away one false myth about gun ownership after another. As Andrew Pollack's Foreword notes; "Learn the actual facts that debunk them." From myths about mass public shootings to suicides to gun ownership rates and crime to gun free zones, Lott addresses the claims you frequently hear in the media and explains what is wrong with those claims.

"John Lott has been giving us the facts about guns for decades. Finally clear to all that one party in America has an anti-Second Amendment platform and wants to disarm you. Now you need to arm yourself with the Truth. Buy and read Gun Control Myths today. Before it's too late." Sebastian Gorka Ph.D., host of AMERICAN First, former Strategist to President Trump

"John Lott shows that the media and many politicians are biased against guns. For example, many stories are written in the media about shooters, but very few about defensive uses of guns. Similarly, he shows that some gun control policies are actually counterproductive. Shooters seek out gun-free zones. If we banned "assault" weapons, shooters might shift to larger hunting guns. The book is copiously footnoted. It is full of statistical and graphical analysis, so that his points are easily grasped and persuasive. Anyone who advocates gun control and does not seriously consider John's work is negligent. Any journalist who does not at least consider John's work is committing journalistic malpractice." Paul H. Rubin, Dobbs Professor of Economics Emeritus, Emory University

"We have John Lott to thank for once again providing factual and empirical based research to counter the anti-gun movement's well-funded and organized campaign based on nothing more than slogans, myths and propaganda designed to demonize supporters of our cherished Second Amendment right to keep and bear arms." David Clarke Sheriff(RET) Milwaukee County

"John Lott is the go-to expert when it comes to protecting the second amendment. Without the second amendment Americans could be stripped of our right to arm ourselves against aggressors. Arm yourselves with knowledge by reading "Gun Control Myths" and join me in protecting the Second Amendment." Eric Bolling Host "AMERICA This Week" Sinclair Broadcast

Paperback July 3, 2020 -- Amazon book blurb

3 armed protestors accidentally shot by their own militia member during Louisville demonstrations

Three people were shot by a member of their own militia group during a protest in Louisville, Ky., on Saturday.

All three victims were transported to the University of Louisville Hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

The person who accidentally fired their weapon is a member of the Not F***ing Around Coalition, which is an all-black militia.

"All involved are members of the NFAC and there are no outstanding suspects," Louisville Metro Police Chief Robert Schroeder said. "This is a tragic situation that could have been much worse. I encourage anyone choosing to exercise their Second Amendment rights to do so responsibly."

The LMPD reportedly confiscated a firearm from the NFAC.

After the accidental shooting, approximately 500 NFAC members continued their demonstration and marched through the city.

Along with the heavily-armed NFAC, the far-right militia group Three Percenters also gathered in Louisville.

The NFAC was protesting to demand justice for Breonna Taylor, a 26-year-old woman who was fatally shot in her Louisville home on March 13 by plainclothes police who were serving a no-knock warrant. Taylor's boyfriend, Kenneth Walker, believed the police were home intruders and shot one of the cops.

Taylor was shot eight times. Police were serving a search warrant for a narcotics investigation. No drugs were found at Taylor's apartment.

Louisville has since banned no-knock search warrants. – www.theblaze.com July 25, 2020

'Morality pills' may be the US's best shot at ending the coronavirus pandemic, according to one ethicist

By Parker Crutchfield

COVID-19 threatens everyone, and we all must cooperate to lower the chance that the coronavirus harms any one individual.

My research in bioethics focuses on how to induce those who are noncooperative to get on board. To me, it seems the problem of coronavirus defectors could be solved by moral enhancement: like receiving a vaccine to beef up your immune system, people could take a substance to boost their cooperative, pro-social behavior. Could a psychoactive pill be the solution to the pandemic?

It's a far-out proposal that's bound to be controversial, but one I believe is worth at least considering, given the importance of social cooperation in the struggle to get COVID-19 under control.

I believe society may be better off, both in the short term as well as the long, by boosting not the body's ability to fight off disease but the brain's ability to cooperate with others. What if researchers developed and delivered a moral enhancer rather than an immunity enhancer?

Moral enhancement is the use of substances to make you more moral. The psychoactive substances act on your ability to reason about what the right thing to do is, or your ability to be empathetic or altruistic or cooperative.

For example, oxytocin, the chemical that, among other things, can induce labor or increase the bond between mother and child, may cause a person to be more empathetic and altruistic, more giving and generous. The same goes for psilocybin, the active component of "magic mushrooms." These substances have been shown to lower aggressive behavior in those with antisocial personality disorder and to improve the ability of sociopaths to recognize emotion in others.

These substances interact directly with the psychological underpinnings of moral behavior; others that make you more rational could also help. Then, perhaps, the people who choose to go maskless or flout social distancing guidelines would better understand that everyone, including them, is better off when they contribute, and rationalize that the best thing to do is cooperate.

There are of course pitfalls to moral enhancement as an alternative to vaccines. One is that oxytocin may cause some people to be more pro-social, it also appears to encourage ethnocentrism. But this doesn't mean that a morality pill is impossible. The solution to direct resources to related research in neuroscience, psychology or one of the behavioral sciences.

Another challenge is that the defectors who need moral enhancement are also the least likely to sign up for it. As some have argued, a solution would be to make moral enhancement compulsory or administer it secretly, perhaps via the water supply. These actions require weighing other values. Does the good of covertly dosing the public with a drug that would change people's behavior outweigh individuals' autonomy to choose whether to participate? Does the good associated with wearing a mask outweigh an individual's autonomy to not wear one?

The scenario in which the government forces an immunity booster upon everyone is plausible. And the military has been forcing enhancements like vaccines or "uppers" upon soldiers for a long time. The scenario in which the government forces a morality booster upon everyone is far-fetched. But a strategy like this one could be a way out of this pandemic, a future outbreak or the suffering associated with climate change. That's why we should be thinking of it now.

Parker Crutchfield is an Associate Professor of Medical Ethics, Humanities and Law, Western Michigan University

-- theconversation.com August 10, 2020

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